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April 2, 1996
(Justice)

Minister comments on incident at Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Centre at Whitbourne

Justice Minister Chris Decker today commended the youth care workers at the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Centre at Whitbourne for their ongoing commitment to maintaining the safety of the centre's residents.

"I am proud of the workers at the youth centre for having prevented what could have been a tragic incident on Saturday evening," said Mr. Decker. "Any incident of attempted self harm is of great concern. It is imperative that the safety of this boy as well as that of the other youths and the staff at the centre remain a top priority."

On Saturday, March 30 at 10:20 p.m., workers at the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Centre at Whitbourne intervened when they discovered that a recent admission to the centre, a 14-year-old boy, was planning to harm himself. The boy was found before anything had happened, is currently under observation, and is receiving appropriate treatment and care.

Mr. Decker said: "The Department of Justice is dedicated to ensuring quality care and safety for all youths who are committed to secure custody. A review of institutional security has been ongoing over the last several weeks. This review is being led by senior management of Adult Corrections in cooperation with the RNC and management of the Youth Corrections Division. We're looking at all aspects of institutional security to ensure maximum safety and security remain a priority at the youth centres at Whitbourne and Pleasantville."

The RCMP was advised of the incident, but due to appropriate actions taken by staff of the youth centre, no further police investigation will be necessary.

Contact: Susan Laite, Assistant Director of Public Relations, (709) 729-0110.

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12:55 p.m. ct



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